

# **HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION (BULLYING) IN MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

## **A REPORT TO THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON INCIDENTS REPORTED UNDER THE SAFE SCHOOLS REPORTING ACT OF 2005**

**Presented by the  
Maryland State Department of Education**

**March 31, 2006**

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# HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION (BULLYING) IN MARYLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## INTRODUCTION

The Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 became effective on July 1, 2005. The law (Education Article §7-424 of the Annotated Code) requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to require a county board of education to report incidents of harassment or intimidation against students in public schools under the county board's jurisdiction. Additionally, MSDE is required to create and distribute a standard victim of harassment or intimidation report form, and to submit a report to the Maryland General Assembly consisting of a summary of the information included in the victim of harassment and intimidation forms filed with the county boards the previous year. This report describes the process used by MSDE to carry out the mandates of this law. Furthermore, the report provides additional information gathered as a result of the implementation of the law, including local school system (LSS) practices and procedures employed in order to meet this requirement. Finally, the findings from the LSS reports are detailed, including incident rates, locations and descriptions of the incidents, ages of victims and perpetrators, alleged motives of the perpetrators, investigative methods used, corrective actions taken by schools, number of days missed by victims and perpetrators, and the number of false allegations reported.

## PROCESS

In compliance with the law, MSDE was tasked with developing forms that included the elements required by the law. MSDE assembled a group of stakeholders that included representatives from Carroll, Montgomery, Baltimore, Cecil, and Frederick Counties. Additionally, representatives from the mental health profession participated. The desire of each of the participants was to develop forms that would include the elements required by law, but would not go beyond the law, and thereby would not include questions *that were not required*. With guidance from the Office of the Attorney General, the group worked to reach consensus on forms and procedures that would fulfill the intent of the legislation. Furthermore, a spreadsheet was developed to ensure the accurate and consistent collection of data from all LSSs.

Once the forms were finalized, they were sent to the local superintendents of schools for review and comment. Additionally, draft forms were sent to directors of student services, school counseling supervisors, and supervisors of safe and drug-free schools for comment. Where possible, and in keeping with the decision to include *only* elements mandated by law, comments and suggestions were incorporated into the forms.

The *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Reporting Form* is a standard form to be used by all public schools, and can not be modified. The form is attached to this report (Appendix I).

The *Harassment Or Intimidation (Bullying) Incident School Investigation Form* was presented to schools and local systems as a template (see Appendix II), but could be changed to align with local school system policies. However, the elements on the form needed to remain in order to complete the spreadsheet, the *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument* (see Appendix III).

On August 23, 2005, an administrative meeting was held with representatives from each of the twenty-four school systems. The purpose of the meeting was to disseminate the forms and describe the process that would be followed by local schools, local systems, and MSDE. School system representatives were provided with directions and a timeline for the implementation of this law and the submission of data (see Appendix IV). School systems were encouraged to disseminate the forms immediately, and begin the process as quickly as possible. MSDE staff provided ongoing follow-up via other meetings (e.g. with the directors of student services), communications, and reminders.

The process to disseminate the forms was not addressed by the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 and thus was not mandated by MSDE. The processes to disseminate forms varied from school to school and included mailing the forms home to parents, sending the forms home with students, placing the forms on school web sites, putting the forms on office countertops, placing the forms in classrooms, or leaving the forms in school counseling offices.

A major concern not addressed in the law had to do with the retention of the forms once processed. An Advice of Council dated December 20, 2005 states that the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) defines student records as records that are directly related to a student and that are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. The Maryland Student Records System Manual, authorized by COMAR 13A.08.02, essentially mirrors FERPA and states that "Records are information recorded in any way, including by not limited to handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm, or microfiche." Therefore, given the information contained in the harassment and intimidation forms, the Advice of Council is that these forms are student records for both the victim and the perpetrator. School staff has expressed serious concerns regarding this issue. An amendment to §7-424 may be required in order to preclude these forms from becoming a part of the student's record.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Implementation of the Law by Local School Systems**

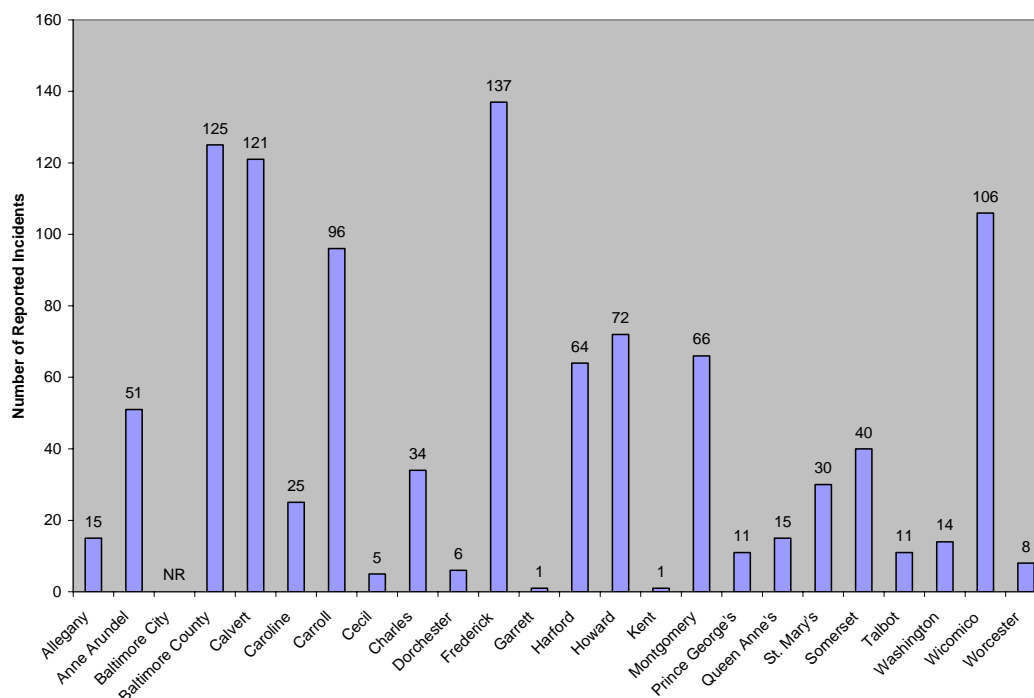
Twenty-three of 24 LSSs reported data. Only one school system, Baltimore City, did not report any incidents; subsequent investigation by MSDE revealed that the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) did not implement the law. This failure to carry out the law occurred despite the training that a BCPSS representative received on August

23, 2005, and despite the detailed technical assistance and follow-up support provided to local school systems. All other school systems implemented the law as required.<sup>1</sup>

## Incident Rates

A total of 1,054 incidents were reported from September 1, 2005 through January 13, 2006. The number of reported incidents in each LSS is presented in Figure 1; the rate of reported incidents relative to current year enrollment is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 1. Number Of Reported Incidents, By Local School System**

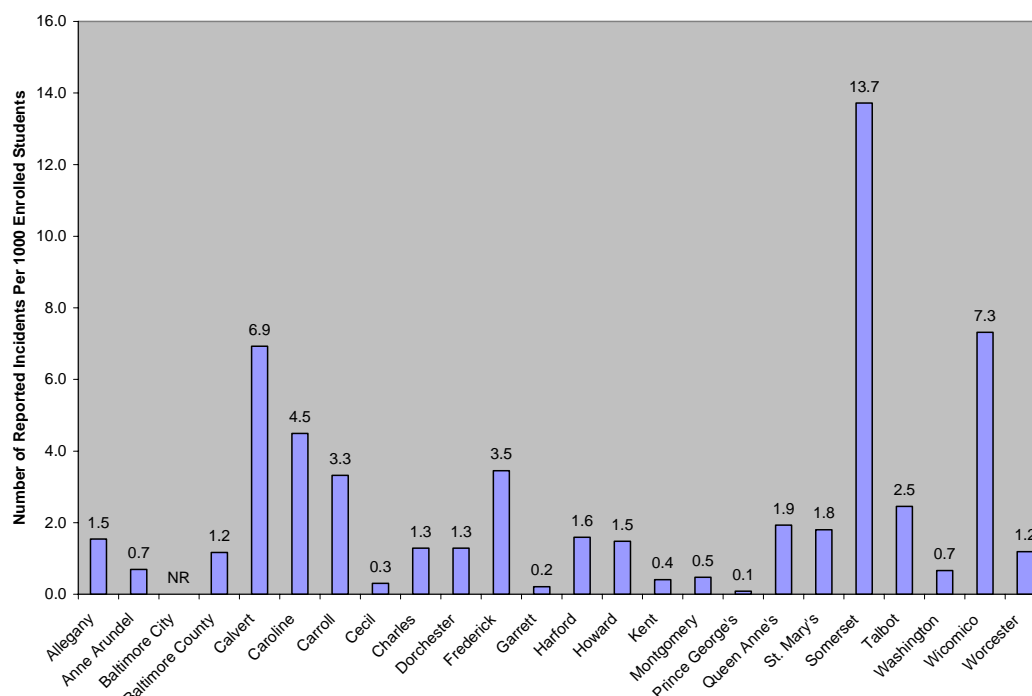


NR = Not Reported

Frederick County reported the most incidents with a total of 137 and a rate of 3.5 incidents per 1,000 enrolled students; however, Somerset County reported the most incidents relative to enrollment with a total number of 40 incidents, representing 13.7 incidents per 1,000 enrolled students. Calvert and Wicomico Counties also had a large number of reports (121 and 106 respectively), with incident rates relative to enrollment of 6.9 and 7.3 incidents per 1,000 enrolled students, respectively. Contrary to enrollment, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties reported 66 and 11 incidents respectively, with rates relative to enrollment of 0.5 and 0.1 incidents per 1,000 enrolled students, respectively.

<sup>1</sup> In response to numerous MSDE inquiries when the BCPSS report had not been received on January 31 as required, the BCPSS contact person repeatedly (between February 1 and February 9) stated she was unable to submit the report due to competing duties. Finally, on February 13, an e-mail was received from the Acting Student Support Services Officer stating that the number of reports received was zero. Follow-up investigation by MSDE staff revealed that BCPSS had not distributed the forms to schools, parents, or students and thus had not implemented the law as required.

**Figure 2. Number of Reported Incidents Relative to Enrollment, by Local School System**



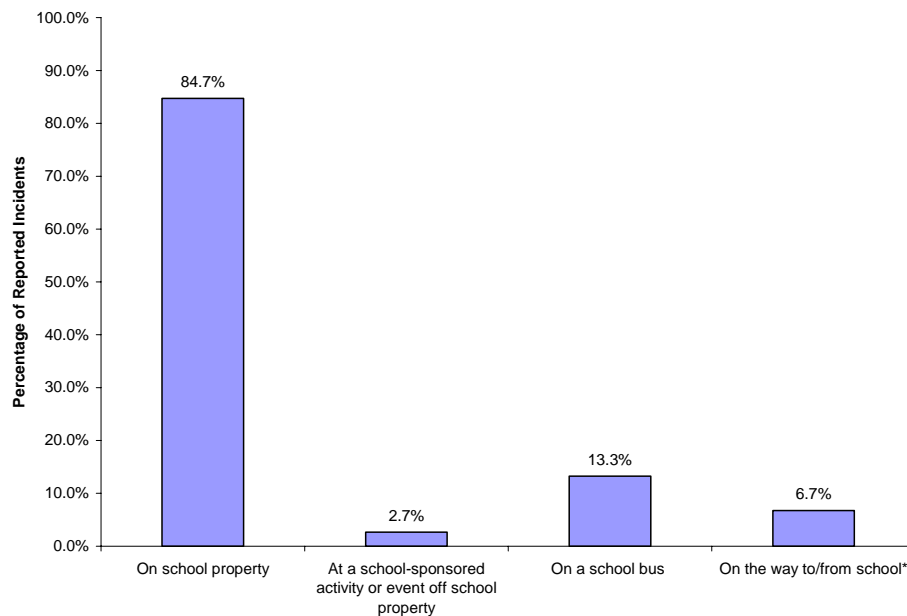
NR = Not Reported

It is important to note that the variation in numbers of reported incidents may largely reflect differences among school systems in levels of awareness on the parts of school staff, parents, and students themselves. School staff with greater understanding of the problems of bullying, and the importance of reporting and investigating incidents, are more likely to be pro-active in disseminating forms and making parents and students aware of the resources available to them. In turn, parents and students who are more aware of the need to report bullying incidents and the assistance that school staff can provide are more likely to report such incidents. Both Frederick County and Somerset County have implemented system-wide and school-wide programs on bullying awareness and prevention. It is believed from these results that both students and parents in these systems feel comfortable reporting bullying and harassment, and there are appropriate responses and consequences from school staff.

## Locations of the Incidents

The majority of the incidents occurred on school property (84.7%), with the second largest number (13.3%) occurring on a school bus (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Locations of Reported Incidents, Statewide**



\* Collected unless specifically excluded by local board policy.

Note: Each incident report could identify more than one location. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

## **Descriptions of the Incidents**

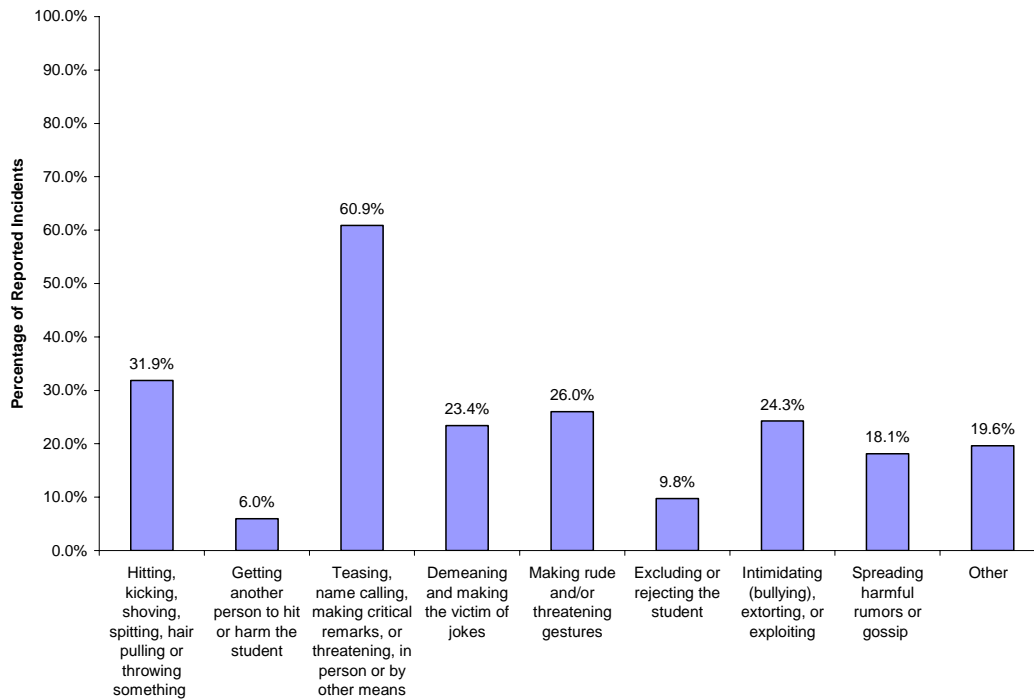
To describe the incident, victims were asked to choose from a list of descriptions which was created from research of the most prevalent forms of bullying (see *Victim of Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Form*). By far, the largest number of incidents involved teasing, name calling, making critical remarks, or threatening (60.0%). In other words, direct verbal bullying/harassment is experienced more than other forms, such as physical bullying, exclusion, gestures, extorting, or spreading rumors. 31.9% of the incidents were physical, including hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling or throwing something (see Figure 4).

## **Ages of Victims and Perpetrators**

Twelve-year-olds were the most frequent victims of incidents of bullying and harassment (n=189, 18.7%) according to the submitted reports (see Figure 5). The number of victims of bullying and harassment increases through age twelve, and then begins to decrease. The greatest number of incidents were perpetrated by 13-year-olds (n=242, 17.7%). The majority of the victims were between the ages of eleven and fourteen (n=577, 57.2%). This is consistent with research that states more bullying and harassment occurs in middle school than in elementary or high school.

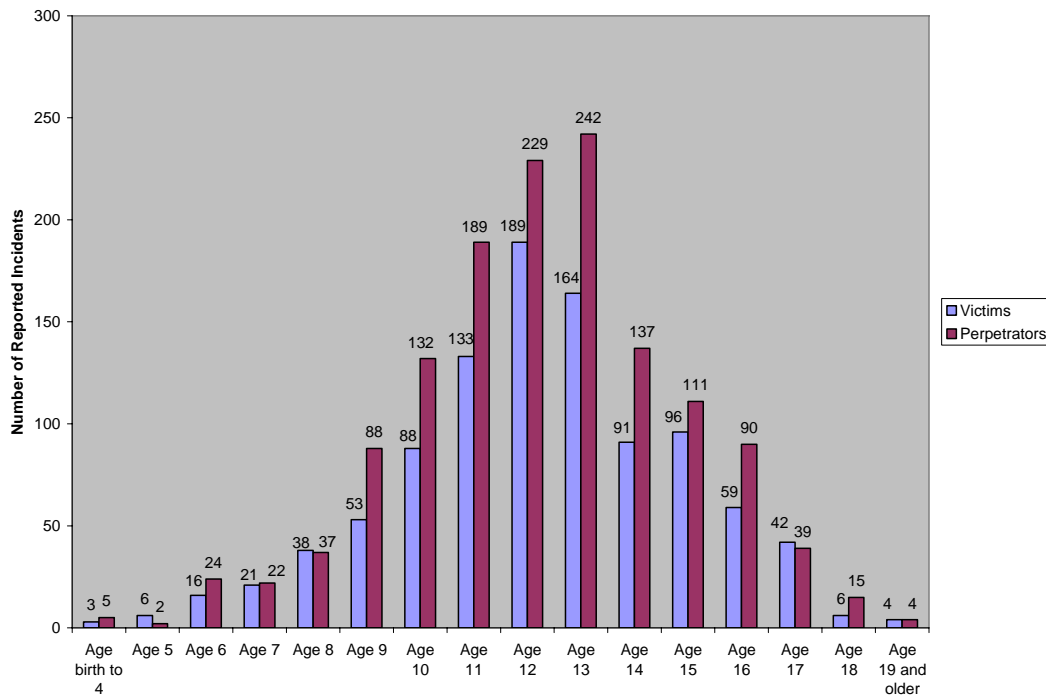


**Figure 4. Descriptions of Reported Incidents, Statewide**



Note: Each incident report could identify more than one description. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

**Figure 5. Ages of Victims and Perpetrators, Statewide**

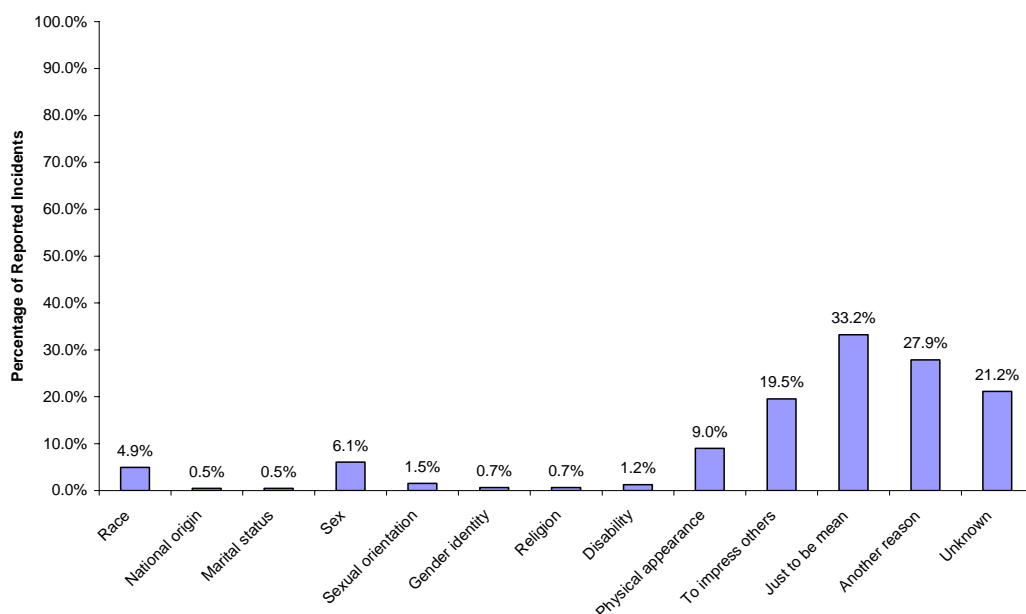


The same is true of the perpetrators. The number of perpetrators grows through age thirteen and then begins to decrease, with the majority of perpetrators at ages eleven, twelve, thirteen and fourteen (n=797, 58.3%). However, the ages of both victims and perpetrators ranged from pre-kindergarten (age 4) to age 19 and older.

## Alleged Perpetrator's Motive

The *School Investigation Form* listed motives that were specified in the law and others that were gathered from research as to the reasons that students bully other students. The motives reported are presented in Figure 6. A significant number of reports identified “Another Reason” (27.9%) and “Unknown” (21.2%) as the alleged motives; because so many incidents (n=517) fell into these categories, MSDE is collecting data to revise this list for the next report. The motive most frequently cited was “Just To Be Mean” (n=350, 33.2%). One-fifth of the incidents were allegedly perpetrated “To Impress Others” (n=206, 19.5%). Physical appearance (n=95, 9.0%), sex (n=64, 6.1%), and race (n=52, 4.9%) were next, although with much smaller percentages. The remaining 53 incidents were allegedly perpetrated due to sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, religion, national origin, or marital status.

**Figure 6. Description of Alleged Motives as Reported by Investigator, Statewide**



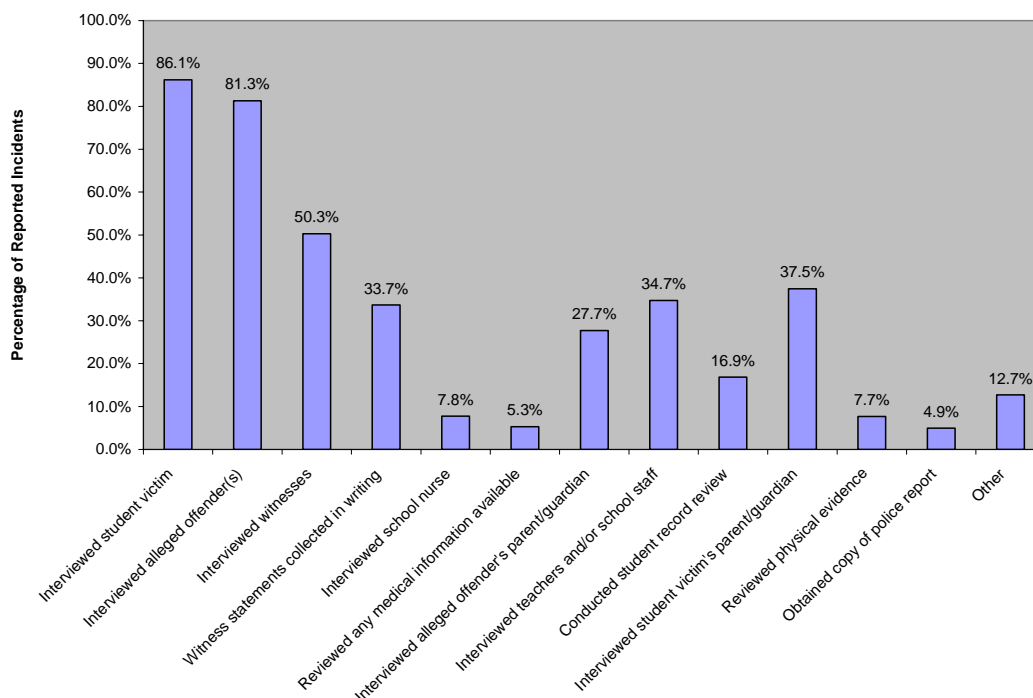
Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one alleged motive. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

## Description of the Investigations

Investigative methods were developed from a variety of techniques utilized by school administrators when investigating any behavioral infraction. The most frequent

investigative methods cited were interviews of student victims (n=908, 86.1%), alleged perpetrators (n=857, 81.3%), witnesses (n=530, 50.3%), and the victim's parents or guardians (n=395, 37.5%). Other means were used when necessary (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Methods Used to Investigate Incident as Reported by Investigator, Statewide**



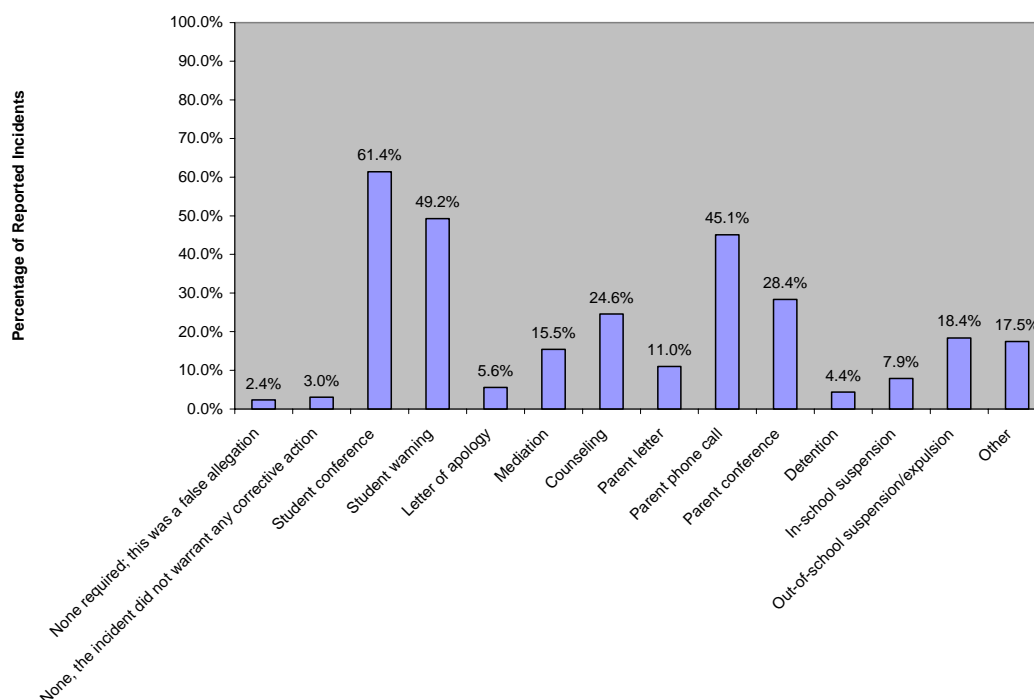
Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one investigative method. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

## Corrective Actions Taken

Corrective action was taken in the vast majority of reported incidents that were not false allegations (n=997, 97.6%). Student conferences (n=647, 61.4%), student warnings (n=519, 49.2%), and parent phone calls (n=475, 45.1%) and conferences (n=299, 28.4%) were among the most frequently used corrective actions (see Figure 8). Fortunately, counseling was also offered in one-fourth of the incidents (n=259, 24.6%).

As schools work toward reducing suspensions and providing positive behavioral interventions, student and parent interactions are being looked at as more effective ways to change behaviors. Only 194 incidents (18.4%) resulted in out-of-school suspension or expulsion, demonstrating that the majority of these incidents would not have been reported to the State without this specific reporting requirement.

**Figure 8. Corrective Actions Taken as Reported by Investigator, Statewide**



Note: Each school investigation form could identify more than one corrective action. Therefore, the percentages do not total 100%.

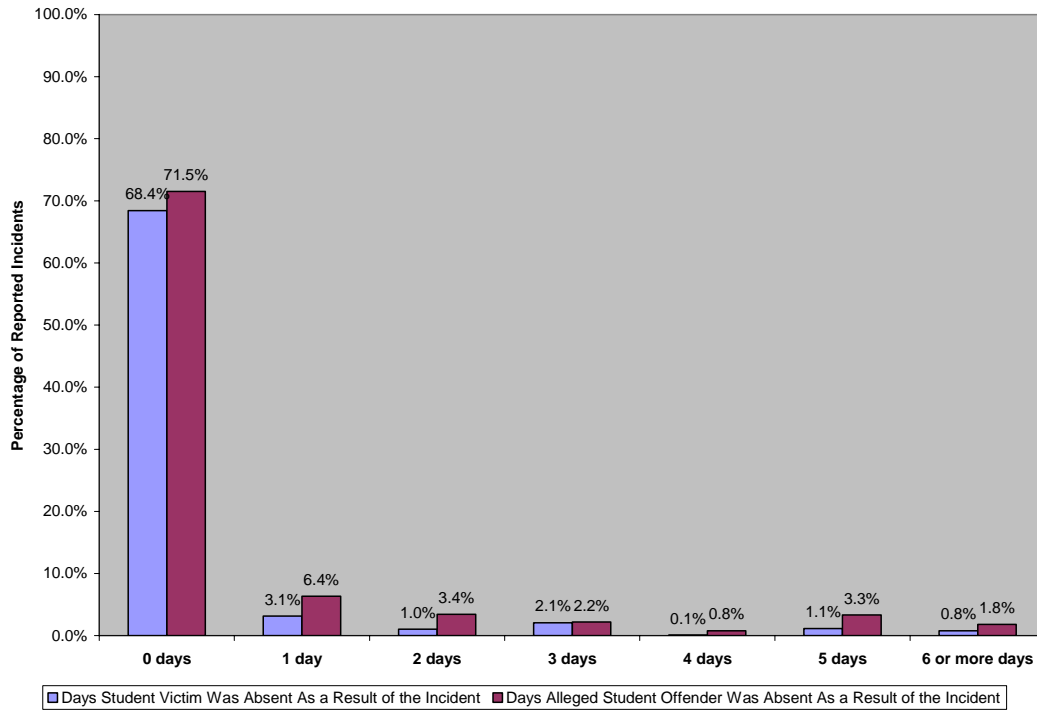
## Number of Days Missed From School

By far, neither the victims nor the perpetrators missed any school as a result of the incident in the majority of cases: victims missed school in 87 cases (8.3%), perpetrators in 188 cases (17.8%) (see Figure 9). Alleged perpetrators were absent in twice as many cases as victims, probably due to suspensions related to the offense. It is unknown from the data whether the perpetrators missed school due to suspension or injury, or whether the victim missed school due to injury, fear of attending or suspension.

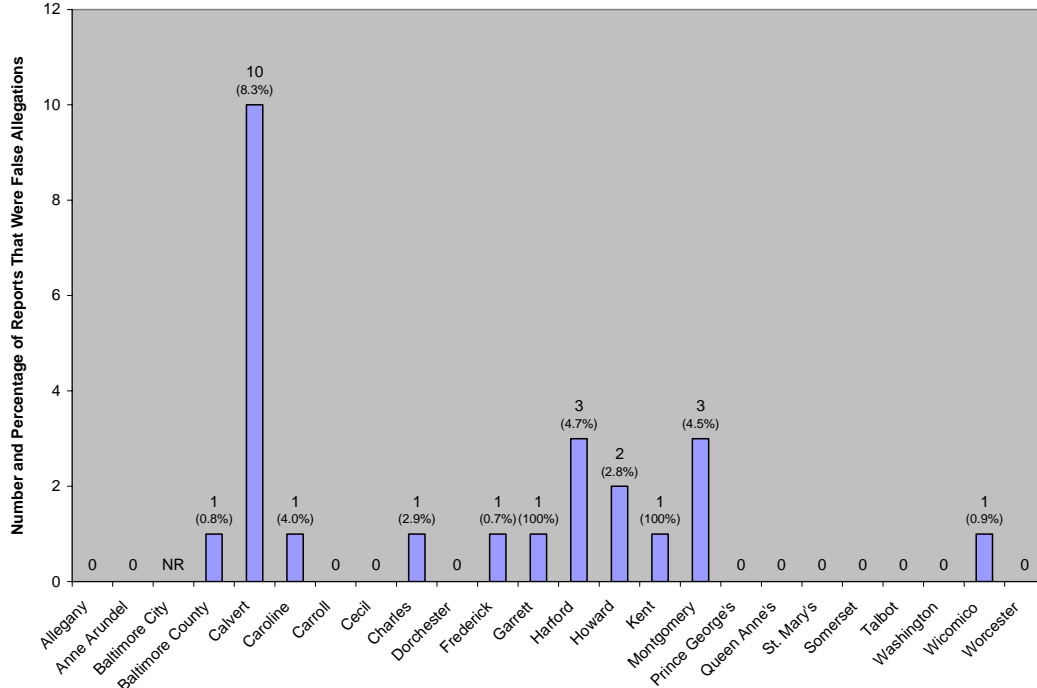
## Number of False Allegations Reported

Investigations into some incident reports found them to be false allegations (see Figure 10). There were a total of 25 false allegations reported in eleven school systems, representing 2.4% of the total. The largest number of false allegations was in Calvert County (n=10, 8.3%).

**Figure 9. Absences as a Result of Incident for Victim and Perpetrator, Statewide**



**Figure 10. Number of False Allegations, by Local School System**



NR = Not Reported

## SUMMARY

Goal 4 of Maryland's educational plan, Achievement Matters Most, aims for all schools to be "safe, drug-free, and conducive to learning." COMAR 13A.01.04, School Safety, states, "All students in Maryland's public schools, without exception and regardless of race, ethnicity, region, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, socioeconomic status, age, or disability, have the right to educational environments that are safe, appropriate for academic achievement, and free from any form of harassment." However, the *2004 Maryland Adolescent Survey* of students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12 reported that about one-half of the students reported ever feeling unsafe in school. About 10% of those students reported missing some time from school due to feeling unsafe.<sup>2</sup>

While many factors may contribute to a child not feeling safe in school, of great concern to students, parents, school staff, state education administrators, and legislators alike is the occurrence of harassment and intimidation. In just the first half of the 2005-2006 school year, over a thousand incidents of harassment or intimidation were reported in Maryland's public schools using the new reporting system mandated by the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005. All school systems, with the exception of Baltimore City where the law was not implemented, reported incidents. Most incidents occurred at the middle-school ages. The nature and severity of the incidents varied. Nearly one-third (31.9%) of the reported incidents involved a physical attack. Almost one in five incidents (18.4%) resulted in an out-of-school suspension or expulsion. About one incident in twelve (8.3%) caused the victim to miss school. The motives behind these incidents varied; about half (52.8%) were committed "just to be mean" or "to impress others," while one in four incidents (25.0%) were motivated by actual or perceived personal characteristics such as physical appearance, sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, religion, national origin, or marital status.

The number of incidents reported thus far in Maryland represent 1.4 reports filed per 1,000 enrolled students. The extent of harassment or intimidation (bullying) in Maryland public schools is likely underreported by these figures, due to the need for victims or parents to take the initiative to file a report. Findings from surveys, where students self-report in a confidential manner, generally demonstrate a higher incidence rate of bullying and harassment. A survey of a nationally representative sample of more than 15,000 middle- and high-school youth, funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, found that 44.3% of students experienced bullying (either as a victim or a perpetrator) during the spring 1998 term.<sup>3</sup>

The data presented in this report confirm that bullying and harassment are a problem in Maryland schools. The Maryland Student Records System Manual added an offense

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<sup>2</sup> *2004 Maryland Adolescent Survey*, Maryland State Department of Education, October 2005. Available online at [http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/newsroom/special\\_reports/adolescent\\_survey.htm](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/newsroom/special_reports/adolescent_survey.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among U.S. youth: Prevalence and association with psychosocial adjustment. *JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association*, 285, 2094-2100.

code specific to “bullying,” beginning in the 2005-2006 school year. The code will reflect the number of students that are suspended as a result of bullying. The data on “corrective actions” in this report show that only 26.3% of the reported incidents resulted in the suspension or expulsion of the alleged perpetrators. Therefore, the magnitude of bullying in schools will not be depicted by suspension data alone.

MSDE is submitting this report in order to provide the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly with the information requested by §7-424. Incidents of harassment and intimidation will continue to be collected this year, and for the next three years. Incidents for the entire 2005-2006 school year will be reported in the next report, to be submitted on March 31, 2007. However, to support this initiative, MSDE will continue to assist LSSs as they develop and implement system-wide and school-wide programs of prevention and intervention to address harassment and intimidation (bullying). It is important that school systems and schools continue to educate students and parents about bullying and harassment, provide resources for bullying prevention, encourage victims to report incidents when they do occur, and follow up with thorough investigations and corrective actions.

## Appendix I: Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Reporting Form

### HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION (BULLYING) REPORTING FORM

Directions: Harassment and intimidation (bullying) are serious and will not be tolerated. This is a form to report alleged harassment and intimidation (bullying) that occurred on school property; at a school-sponsored activity or event off school property; on a school bus; or on the way to and/or from school\*, in the current school year. If you are a student victim, the parent/guardian of a student victim, or a close adult relative of a student victim, and wish to report an incident of alleged harassment or intimidation (bullying), complete this form and return it to the Principal at the student victim's school. Contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time.

**Harassment and intimidation (bullying) means conduct, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being, and is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic such as race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability, or is threatening or seriously intimidating.**

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School System: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Place an X in the appropriate box: ☐ Student ☐ Parent/guardian ☐ Close adult relative

1. Name of student victim: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

2. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (If known): <small>(Please print)</small>	Age	School (if known)	Is he/she a student?
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

3. On what date(s) did the incident happen?:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year      Month Day Year      Month Day Year

4. Where did the incident happen (choose all that apply)?

- ☐ On school property      ☐ At a school-sponsored activity or event off school property  
☐ On a school bus      ☐ On the way to/from school\*

5. Place an X next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened (choose all that apply):

- ☐ Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing something  
☐ Getting another person to hit or harm the student  
☐ Teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means  
☐ Demeaning and making the victim of jokes  
☐ Making rude and/or threatening gestures  
☐ Excluding or rejecting the student  
☐ Intimidating (bullying), extorting, or exploiting  
☐ Spreading harmful rumors or gossip  
☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\*Will be collected unless specifically excluded by local board policy



## Appendix I: Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Reporting Form

6. What did the alleged offender(s) say or do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

7. Why did the harassment or intimidation (bullying) occur? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

8. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

☐ No                      ☐ Yes, but it did not require medical attention                      ☐ Yes, and it required medical attention

9. If there was a physical injury, do you think there will be permanent effects? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Did a psychological injury result from this incident? Place an **X** next to one of the following:

☐ No                      ☐ Yes, but psychological services have not been sought                      ☐ Yes, and psychological services have been sought

12. Is there any additional information you would like to provide? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix II: Harassment Or Intimidation (Bullying) Incident School Investigation Form

### HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION (BULLYING) INCIDENT SCHOOL INVESTIGATION FORM

School Personnel Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School System: \_\_\_\_\_

**Person Reporting Incident** (From reporting form) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Place an **X** in the appropriate box: ☐ Student ☐ Parent/guardian ☐ Close adult relative

1. Name of student victim: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Days absent as a result of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

2. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (If known):	Age	School	Is he/she a student?	Days absent due to incident
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

(Please print)

Total number of alleged offenders: \_\_\_\_\_

### INVESTIGATION

3. What actions were taken to investigate this incident? (choose all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed student victim                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed student victim's parent/guardian   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged offender(s)            | <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged offender's parent/guardian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed witnesses                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Examined physical evidence                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Witness statements collected in writing    | <input type="checkbox"/> Conducted student record review                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed school nurse                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Obtained copy of police report                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed any medical information available | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed teachers and/or school staff   |   |

4. Why did the harassment or intimidation (bullying) occur (alleged motives)? (choose all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of race               | <input type="checkbox"/> Because of disability                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of national origin    | <input type="checkbox"/> Because of physical appearance            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of marital status     | <input type="checkbox"/> To impress others                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of sex                | <input type="checkbox"/> Just to be mean                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of sexual orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Because of another reason (specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of gender identity    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Because of religion           | <input type="checkbox"/> The reason is unknown                     |

## Appendix II: Harassment Or Intimidation (Bullying) Incident School Investigation Form

5. What corrective actions were taken in this case (choose all that apply)?

- ☐ None were required, this was a false allegation
- ☐ None, the incident did not warrant any corrective action
- ☐ Student conference
- ☐ Student warning
- ☐ Letter of apology
- ☐ Mediation
- ☐ Counseling
- ☐ Parent letter
- ☐ Parent phone call
- ☐ Parent conference
- ☐ Detention
- ☐ In-school suspension
- ☐ Out-of-school suspension/expulsion
- ☐ Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Additional pertinent information gained during the interview : \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

7. Investigator notes: \_\_\_\_\_

(Attach a separate sheet if necessary)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix III: Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument

Maryland State Department of Education in accordance with the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005

# Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument

**Reporting Period: Beginning of 2005-2006 school year through January 13, 2006**

Instructions: Enter the total number of responses in each category. Because some items are "mark all that apply," totals may exceed the total number of reports filed. Enter responses in bordered, highlighted cells.

**Local School System:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**R.I** **Ages:**

Age birth to 4

Age 5

Age 6

Age 7

Age 8

Age 9

Age 9

Age 10

Age 10

Age 11

Age 11  
Age 12Age 12  
Age 13

Age 14

Age 15

Age 16

Age 17

Age 18

Age 19 and older

**Indicate the number of persons of each age**

[illegible]**R Location of the Incident:**

### On school property

At a school-sponsored activity or event off school property

On a school bus

On the way to/from school\*\*

\*\*Will be collected unless specifically excluded by local board policy

### Number of Incidents


**R Description of the Incident:**

Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting,  
hair pulling or throwing something

Getting another person to hit or harm the student

Teasing, name calling, making critical remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means

Demeaning and making the victim of jokes

Making rude and/or threatening gestures.

Excluding or rejecting the student

Intimidating (bullying), extorting, or exploiting

Spreading harmful rumors or gossip

Other

### Number of Incidents

[illegible]

## Appendix III: Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument

<b>I</b>	<b><u>Alleged Motives:</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Incidents</u></b>
	Race	
	National origin	
	Marital status	
	Sex	
	Sexual orientation	
	Gender identity	
	Religion	
	Disability	
	Physical appearance	
	To impress others	
	Just to be mean	
	Another reason	
	Unknown	

<b>R,I</b>	<b><u>Days Student Victim Was Absent As a Result of the Incident</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Incidents</u></b>
	0 days	
	1 day	
	2 days	
	3 days	
	4 days	
	5 days	
	6 days	
	7 days	
	8 days	
	9 days	
	10 days	
	More than 10 days	

<b>I</b>	<b><u>Days Alleged Student Offender Was Absent As a Result of the Incident</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Incidents</u></b>
	0 days	
	1 day	
	2 days	
	3 days	
	4 days	
	5 days	
	6 days	
	7 days	
	8 days	
	9 days	
	10 days	
	More than 10 days	

## Appendix III: Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument

<b>I</b>	<b>Investigative Methods:</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>
	Interviewed student victim	
	Interviewed alleged offender(s)	
	Interviewed witnesses	
	Witness statements collected in writing	
	Interviewed school nurse	
	Reviewed any medical information available	
	Interviewed alleged offender's parent/guardian	
	Interviewed teachers and/or school staff	
	Conducted student record review	
	Interviewed student victim's parent/guardian	
	Reviewed physical evidence	
	Obtained copy of police report	
	Other	

<b>I</b>	<b>Corrective Actions:</b>	<b>Number of Incidents</b>
	None required; this was a false allegation	
	None, the incident did not warrant any corrective action	
	Student conference	
	Student warning	
	Letter of apology	
	Mediation	
	Counseling	
	Parent letter	
	Parent phone call	
	Parent conference	
	Detention	
	In-school suspension	
	Out-of-school suspension/expulsion	
	Other	
	<b><u>Total Local School System</u></b>	
	<b><u>Number of Incident Reports</u></b>	
	<b><u>Filed:</u></b>	

***Thank you for your assistance in submitting this data.***

Key:

R = Information is on the Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Reporting Form.

I = Information is on the Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Incident School Investigation Form.

## Appendix IV: Directions for Local School Systems

### **Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 Implementation Instructions for Local School Systems**

The **Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005** mandates the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to require county boards of education to report incidents of harassment or intimidation (bullying) against students attending a public school under the jurisdiction of the county board. The law further specifies procedures for reporting these acts, including specific guidelines for a *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying)* form. Additionally, the law requires MSDE to report to the Maryland General Assembly the following:

- A description of the act constituting the harassment or intimidation (bullying);
- The age of the victim and alleged perpetrator;
- The allegation of the alleged perpetrator's motive;
- A description of the investigation of the complaint and any corrective action taken by the appropriate school authorities;
- The number of days a student is absent from school, if any, as a result of the incident; and
- The number of false allegations reported.

Each local school system (LSS) is required to designate a staff person who will be responsible for implementing this law within the system. LSSs will establish procedures for collecting, compiling and reporting information to MSDE. The following procedures are defined by the law:

- MSDE is providing a copy of the standard *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Form* to LSSs. Each LSS will make this form available to students, parents or guardians of students, and close relatives of students.
- Students, parents or guardians of students, and close relatives of students will return the completed *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Form* to the principal of the student victim's school.
- An investigation of the alleged incident will occur in accordance with LSS policies.
- A sample *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying) Investigation Form* is being provided. LSSs may modify this form, however, the elements on this form are required to complete the *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument*.
- **LSSs will need information from the *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying)* form as well as information obtained from the investigation in order to complete the *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument* (Excel spreadsheet). The *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument* must be submitted to Dominic Romano at MSDE ([dromano@msde.state.md.us](mailto:dromano@msde.state.md.us)) as an attachment by email by January 31, 2006.**
- A hard copy of the *Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument* must be mailed by January 31, 2006 with the "Certification of Superintendent's Signature" to:

**Dominic Romano  
Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Student and School Services  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201**

## Appendix IV: Directions for Local School Systems

Who is Responsible	What is Needed	Date	Reporting Period
LSS	Make <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying)</i> forms available to students and parents/guardians and close adult relatives	Starting September, 2005 through June 2009	NA
Local Schools	Report alleged incidents and results of investigation to LSS	TBD by LSS	NA
LSS	Submit <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument</i> to MSDE (Dominic Romano- see first page for directions)	January 31, 2006	September, 2005 through January 13, 2006
MSDE	Submit report to Maryland General Assembly	March 31, 2006	September, 2005 through January 13, 2006
LSS	Submit <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument</i> to MSDE	January 31, 2007	School Year 2005-2006
MSDE	Submit report to Maryland General Assembly	March 31, 2007	School Year 2005-2006
LSS	Submit <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument</i> to MSDE (Dominic Romano- see first page for directions)	January 31, 2008	School Year 2006-2007
MSDE	Submit report to Maryland General Assembly	March 31, 2008	School Year 2006-2007
LSS	Submit <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument</i> to MSDE (Dominic Romano- see first page for directions)	January 31, 2009	School Year 2007-2008
MSDE	Submit report to Maryland General Assembly	March 31, 2009	School Year 2007-2008
LSS	Submit <i>Harassment and Intimidation (Bullying) Incident Reporting Instrument</i> to MSDE (Dominic Romano- see first page for directions)	January 31, 2010	School Year 2008-2009
MSDE	Submit report to Maryland General Assembly	March 31, 2010	School Year 2008-2009

This law will remain in effect for four years during which these reports will be due.

The following definition of harassment and intimidation (bullying) is included on the *Harassment or Intimidation (Bullying)* form to guide students and parents when completing this form, and to guide LSS staff when investigating incidents.

***Harassment and intimidation (bullying) means conduct, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being, and is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic such as race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability, or is threatening or seriously intimidating.***

If you need additional information, please contact Dominic Romano, Specialist, School Safety, at (410) 767-0301, or email [dromano@msde.state.md.us](mailto:dromano@msde.state.md.us).





**Division of Student and School Services  
Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201**